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Political Scientist's Open Letter on Leninist Interchange

Kinhide Mushakoji
President
International Political Science Assn.
Paris, France

Dear Dr. Mushakoji:

I have received an invitation to join your association. I must respectfully decline.

Your records may show that I was once a member of IPSA. I dropped out when your organization held its 1979 triennial world congress in Moscow. I protested publicly at the ignominy of holding meetings of free scholars dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the capital of a country where the hosts are loyal servants of a totalitarian dictatorship, one which derides the very idea of objective truth.

I was not the only political scientist to make this protest. You will recall that such distinguished colleagues as Sidney Verba, Alex Inkeles, Gabriel Almond and Harvey Mansfield Jr. also declined to attend, as Prof. Verba wrote at the time, a conference whose venue was a country using "psychiatry—one of the social sciences—as a means of political repression."

How can you suggest that IPSA is an organization whose objectives are to promote the advancement of political science throughout the world when your members include the so-called political science associations of Bulgaria, China, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia? What can such communist associations advance except Marxist-Leninist laws of history or the legitimizing of communist repression of academic freedom? Can there be a genuine interchange of ideas among free scholars and those who very possibly are informants of the KGB?

It is quite evident from your recent meeting that IPSA has allowed itself to be used as part of the "united front" movement of international communism. You have implicitly told the world that a communist political scientist is as much a free scholar as is his counterpart in a democratic—or even authoritarian—country. And at your last world congress this summer you went far beyond the canons of academic freedom by electing four communists to your executive council.

Your last executive council listed the soviet agent, Georgii Shakhnazarov, as IPSA's first vice president. He is a member of IPSA's executive committee, which

"approves research committees, study groups, round tables and the programme of world congress. . . ." Do you think a ranking member of the Soviet *nomenklatura* has the moral qualifications to direct an organization of free scholars?

IPSA has now added as vice presidents, joining Mr. Shakhnazarov, so-called political scientists from East Germany, Yugoslavia and Communist China. Even if two of them are not unalloyed admirers of the U.S.S.R., they are all surely adherents of Marxism-Leninism, a philosophy that repudiates academic independence of party or government.

I cannot understand how, in the age of Sakharov and Shcharansky, an American political scientist of the moral stature of Seymour Martin Lipset can sit on the same executive council with a Soviet policeman, whose government as a matter of policy and practice is anti-Semitic. What would Prof. Lipset say if the international confederation of free trade unions were to accept into membership the trade unions of the U.S.S.R., East Germany, Yugoslavia and China? Would not free trade unions be violating their code of ethics, their charter if they sat at the same table with communist labor leaders? Can there be free trade unions in a communist country? Can there be academic freedom in a communist dictatorship?

(Many of these same questions can be addressed to the American Political Science Association, at whose meeting last weekend these issues were not discussed. Not only will APSA host the IPSA congress in 1988, but it is itself embarking on a new series of "colloquia" with supposed Soviet scholars.)

If one reads the 1980 report of John Trent, IPSA's secretary general, about the Moscow congress, it is obvious that IPSA compromised its scholarly independence at least five years ago. In the context of a meeting that included efforts by some participants to meet with Soviet dissidents, the report says in muffled language:

"International associations must be increasingly mature and sophisticated in their activities. For instance, as a basic condition, it is unreasonable to undertake major projects that go against foreign policy trends" (italics added).

When, in the context of relations with the U.S.S.R., an appeal is made to a Western audience that it must be "increasingly

mature and sophisticated" and that it shouldn't do things which go "against foreign policy trends," one can be sure that the pass has been sold to the enemies of academic freedom because all that's being said is, for heaven's sake, don't be nasty to the Russians.

Let me offer another sample of how IPSA has sold the pass. The secretary general's report says that "difficulties in international relations are as often results of misunderstandings, communication barriers, lack of on the spot verifications, and stereotype reactions as they are of willful malevolence." Who could possibly, after almost seven decades of Soviet history and 10 years of the Helsinki process, believe such nonsense that "difficulties in international relations" with the Soviet Union were due as much, say, to "misunderstandings" as to "willful malevolence"? To paraphrase Orwell, only an intellectual could believe that; no ordinary man would.

Not willful malevolence—Afghanistan? Shooting down a civilian airliner? Occupation of Poland, the Baltic countries? Not willful malevolence exploiting science with a tyranny of pharmacology and aggression by "yellow rain"? Not willful malevolence silencing or exiling during the past decade some 100 of the best Russian writers?

I thank you for your invitation to join. I will not accept.

Yours sincerely,
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